

# SAN FRANCISCO BAY CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

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**TO:** All Design Review Board Members

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**SUBJECT: Richmond Ferry Terminal Project; First Pre-Application Review**  
(For Board consideration on July 13, 2015)

## Project Summary

**Project Sponsors.** The Water Emergency Transportation Authority (WETA); City of Richmond.

**Project Representatives.** Chad Mason (WETA); Chadrick Smalley (City of Richmond); Kent Royle (Marcy Wong Donn Logan Architects).

**Project Site.** The proposed ferry terminal would be located directly south of the terminus of Harbour Way South, adjacent to the Ford Assembly Building and the Craneway Pavilion wharf, in the City of Richmond. The site is bound by the Port of Richmond to the north, the Ford Assembly Building and wharf to the east, the Ford Channel to the south, and the Santa Fe Channel to the west (Exhibits, pp. 1-2). The project area includes an existing gangway and passenger float, parking lots to the west of the Ford Assembly Building, and Sheridan Point Park to the south of the parking lots. An existing kayak launch ramp that does not provide universal access is located east of the existing gangway and float. Currently, the Bay Trail runs along the eastern perimeter of the Ford Peninsula, through Lucretia Edwards Park, and then along the southern perimeter of the Peninsula (Exhibits, p. 2). Beyond the wharf, the Bay trail continues in a north/south direction along Harbour Way South. A Bay Trail spur continues along the southern shoreline of the parking lots and ends at an existing vista point in Sheridan Point Park. The Bay Trail continues on the eastern perimeter of the Ford Peninsula along the Marina Yacht Harbor shoreline.

**Proposed Project.** The proposed project involves the removal of an existing gangway, float, ramp and piles, and construction of a new ferry terminal, including a queuing area, an entry gate with information signage, a 88-foot-long, 704-square-foot gangway, 256 square feet of landing platforms, a 30-foot-long, 240-square-foot fixed ramp, and a 80-foot-long by approximately 24-foot-wide (approximately 1,920 square feet) passenger float (Exhibit, p. 10). The entry to the terminal would be located at the existing plaza, a dedicated public access area. The proposed queuing area would be located south of the existing Bay Trail spur along the existing plaza guardrail. The new gangway and ramping system to the float would be ADA compliant. The float would accommodate one ferry vessel at a time. Vessels would make two to three trips in the morning and afternoon peak hours and would be docked approximately 5-7 minutes. Ferry passengers would park in the parking lots

west of the Ford Assembly building. The parking lot would include 17 public access parking spaces. Twenty-four bicycle storage lockers would also be provided at the southern end of the parking lot. In addition, the project includes the demolition of a kayak launch ramp, and construction of a new, universally-accessible kayak launch ramp in Marina Bay Yacht Harbor, east of the ferry terminal site. The new kayak launch would consist of an 80-foot-long by 4.5-foot-wide ADA accessible gangway and an approximately 40-foot-long by 16-foot-wide pile-supported low freeboard kayak float (Exhibit, p. 15). The proposed kayak launch would be located adjacent to an existing boat launching ramp. A kayak staging area would be provided at the landing on the shore and would be separated from the adjacent Bay Trail using striping and signage. The project would also involve extension of a Bay Trail spur and other public access improvements, described below (Exhibit, p. 8).

**Public Access.** The proposed public access improvements for this project include:

1. Construction of a new universally-accessible kayak launch consisting of an 80-foot-long by 4.5-foot-wide ADA accessible gangway and an approximately 40-foot-long by 16-foot-wide pile-supported low freeboard kayak float.
2. Extension of the Bay Trail spur in a north/south direction to the end of the parking area. The 8-foot-wide, approximately 557-foot-long path would include benches and lookouts extending from the trail. The trail and lookouts would provide a total of approximately 6,479 square feet of public access area.
3. Improving the existing Bay Trail spur connecting the plaza area adjacent the Ford Assembly Building and existing Sheridan Point Park, by paving with concrete to provide a fully accessible pathway.
4. Improving the existing sidewalk on the west side of Harbour Way South by widening the sidewalk to eight feet and extending the pedestrian pathway south to the plaza.
5. Three east-west pedestrian aisles within the parking lots, connecting the Bay Trail extension and the improved sidewalk on the west side of Harbour Way South.
6. Landscaping enhancements, including a planting border along the Bay Trail spur extension, trees at the terminus of the trail spur extension, and trees and drought-tolerant plants in the parking lot.
7. Seventeen public access parking spaces.

**San Francisco Bay Plan Policies.** The *San Francisco Bay Plan* (Bay Plan) **Public Access** policies state that access should “be provided in and through every new development in the Bay or on the shoreline,” be designed—using the Commission’s *Public Access Design Guidelines*—“to encourage diverse Bay-related activities and movement to and along the shoreline,” be conveniently located near parking and public transit, “permit barrier free access for persons with disabilities to the maximum feasible extent...and include an ongoing maintenance program.” These policies state in part that “public access should be sited, designed and managed to prevent significant adverse effects on wildlife,” and that, “whenever public access to the Bay is provided as a condition of development, on fill or in the shoreline, the access should be permanently guaranteed.” These policies further state that, “Any public access provided as a condition of development should either be required to remain viable in the event of future sea level rise or flooding, or equivalent access consistent with the project should be provided nearby.”

The Bay Plan **Appearance, Design and Scenic Views** policies state, in part, that, “all bayfront development should be designed to enhance the pleasure of the user or viewer of the Bay” and that “maximum efforts should be made to provide, enhance, or preserve views of the Bay and shoreline, especially from public areas, from the Bay itself, and from the opposite shore.” These policies also state, in part, that “[s]horeline developments should be built in clusters, leaving open area around them to permit more frequent views of the Bay.”

The Bay Plan **Transportation** policies state in part that, “ferry terminals should be sited at locations that are near navigable channels...” and, wherever possible, “near higher density, mixed-use development served by public transit.” In addition, these policies state that shoreline projects and bridges over the Bay “should include pedestrian and bicycle paths that will either be a part of the Bay Trail or connect the Bay Trail with other regional and community trails.” The Bay Plan **Recreation** policies state, in part, that, “ferry terminal configuration and operation should not disrupt continuous shoreline access.”

The *Public Access Design Guidelines* state that public access should feel public, be designed so that the user is not intimidated nor is the user’s appreciation diminished by structures, or incompatible uses and that there should be visual cues that public access is available for the public’s use by using site furnishings, such as benches, trash containers and lighting. The *Public Access Design Guidelines* further state that public access areas should be designed for a wide range of users, should maximize user comfort by designing for weather and day and night use and that each site’s historical, cultural and natural attributes provide opportunities for creating projects with a “sense of place” and a unique identity.

**Public Access Issues.** The staff would like the Board’s feedback on the following questions:

1. **Would the proposed project provide attractive new public access areas?** Does the site layout provide usable and inviting public spaces that are oriented to the Bay, incorporate unique and special amenities that draw the public to them, create a “sense of place”, are safe, and feel public?
2. **Are the connections to and through the public access spaces adequate and appropriate?** Are there adequate amenities, such as seating, lighting, and trash receptacles, to accommodate anticipated levels of uses? Are there potential conflicts between passengers queuing in the plaza and public access on the Bay Trail and in the plaza? How can potential conflicts be avoided or minimized?
3. **Does the proposed project maintain public views to the Bay?** Can the proposed entry gate and vessels be sited or designed to minimize view impacts down Harbour Way South or to enhance those views?
4. **Does the proposed kayak launch provide adequate amenities and is it designed to avoid or minimize potential conflicts with the Bay Trail?** Does the facility provide adequate area for boat staging? Do the proposed striping and signage at the kayak launch landing provide adequate separation between the Bay Trail and the kayak staging area to minimize user conflicts, or are there other ways to minimize potential conflicts? Is the proposed location of the kayak launch compatible with the existing adjacent boat launch and are there suggestions for ways to minimize potential problems?